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## ***Indiana Main Street Awards Announced at State Conference***

INDIANAPOLIS – Lt. Governor Joe Kernan today announced the winners of the Indiana Main Street 2002 Downtown Revitalization Awards, which honor achievements in downtown revitalization and development.

Local Main Street programs may nominate communities, organizations or individuals for awards. Winners are chosen by the Indiana Main Street Council.

“The winners of these awards are working hard to ensure that Indiana’s downtowns thrive,” said Kernan, who serves as director of the Indiana Department of Commerce, which oversees the Indiana Main Street program. “Thanks to their efforts, new resources are being directed into downtown development projects, which leads to stronger business districts, more tourism opportunities and a growing sense of pride among Main Street communities.”

Thirteen awards were presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Indiana Main Street conference, which is being held today and tomorrow at Amish Acres in Nappanee. The 2002 winners are:

- **Adaptive Reuse Project:** *City of Goshen.* The city purchased the 100-year-old Carnegie Library building and worked with Searce Rudisel Architects, Inc. of Winona Lake to convert it into the new Goshen City Hall. The city also purchased and converted a nearby former high school into the Municipal Annex Building. The rehabilitations involved adapting the buildings to meet current needs without substantially altering their historic features.
- **Best Window Display:** *Wendy Rothlisberger, Thistles Gift Store, Madison.* Rothlisberger was recognized for consistently creating unique, colorful displays in her store’s front windows that attract the attention of visitors to downtown Madison.
- **Staff Member of the Year:** *John K. Roberts, Lawrenceburg Main Street Association.* Roberts helped establish the Lawrenceburg Main Street Association in 1998 and serves as its Project Director. During his tenure, he has created a variety of innovative programs that encourage businesses to invest in their building facades and signage and attract visitors to the downtown area.

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- **Downtown Special Event:** *The 5<sup>th</sup> River City Autofest, Downtown Evansville, Inc.* The Autofest, held in downtown Evansville in fall 2001, drew more than 650 car participants from throughout the United States and Canada and attracted a crowd of more than 30,000 people. The event was a boon for hotels, restaurants and retailers in the downtown area.
- **Innovation Award:** *Jeffersonville Main Street, Inc.* Jeffersonville's Smart Growth Lecture Series brings nationally known leaders in downtown planning and preservation to Indiana to share their ideas with merchants, planners, elected officials, developers and citizens.
- **New Development Project:** *Fortune Management of Marion, Inc.* Fortune Management, a Kokomo-based firm that specializes in downtown revitalization, has completed ten development projects in downtown Marion since the fall of 2001. The projects have involved building improvements and façade rehabilitations to make facilities business-friendly as well as more appealing to downtown visitors.
- **Main Street Program of the Year:** *Main Street Aurora.* This program's recent accomplishments include being named a 2002 National Main Street Community, recruiting 15 new businesses to the downtown area, and participating in a market research study that resulted in an action agenda for downtown revitalization. Main Street Aurora also sponsors or participates in a variety of events that attract visitors, including the monthly car show Cruise 'N on Main, a twice-yearly Business Expo and a weeklong art festival.
- **Design of Downtown Public Improvements:** *The Wabash County Government Center.* The new Wabash County Government Center, completed in spring 2002, includes an 18,000-square-foot addition to the existing Memorial Hall on the courthouse square. The new construction utilizes the same type of limestone and Queen Anne style of architecture found on the 1880 Memorial Hall structure.
- **Business Climate Improvements for Downtown:** *Elkhart Urban Enterprise Association's Downtown Façade Loan Program.* The façade program encourages businesses to improve the appearance of their facilities by providing funding for up to 50 percent of eligible costs for rehabilitating the exterior of a commercial/retail building within the Downtown Elkhart Commercial Historic District.
- **Main Street Business of the Year:** *Advent Design, Elkhart.* The owner of Advent Design, Ron Schemenauer, was recognized for his active efforts to improve Elkhart's downtown by spearheading a streetscape project on Main Street, facilitating relationships among entities involved in downtown rehabilitation, and chairing the Elkhart Centre's Economic Restructuring committee.

- **Board Member of the Year:** *James Weigand, Elkhart Centre.* In 2001-2002, Weigand, the immediate past president of Elkhart Centre's board of directors, led the organization through the most difficult financial year in its 15-year history by securing new funding sources, trimming expenses and working to maintain the morale of staff and volunteers.
- **Public-Private Partnership in Downtown Revitalization:** *Jefferson County Collaborative Market Project.* This project is a joint effort among 60 organizations in Jefferson County to foster relationships that benefit the county by, for example, coordinating the planning of community events. The project recently had a retail market analysis done, with a focus on downtown Madison's business district, that resulted in strategic plans to reduce the loss of retail businesses and counteract downtown business vacancies.
- **Historic Rehabilitation Project:** *Hornblower Marine Services, New Albany.* Hornblower Marine President and CEO John Waggoner was recognized for renovating the interior of The Reibel House, a hotel built in 1887, while maintaining much of the building's original woodwork and brick. Hornblower Marine occupies the second and third floors of the facility and plans to lease the first floor.

The Indiana Main Street program, established in 1986, provides Indiana's communities with technical assistance in downtown revitalization, focusing on economic redevelopment within the context of historic preservation. It is the largest program of its kind in the country, with more than 160 cities and towns participating.

Indiana Main Street operates under the direction of the Indiana Department of Commerce and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center. For more information on this program, contact the Indiana Main Street Division at 317.232.8912 or visit the Commerce Web site at [www.indianacommerce.com](http://www.indianacommerce.com).

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